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QUARITCH TO MCKINLEY

LONDON, 15 PICCADILLY,
November 11th, 1891.

To the HONORABLE WILLIAM MCKINLEY,
Governor of Ohio,
CLEVELAND, U.S.A.

DEAR SIR,
I take the liberty of sending you this Letter on the subject of the U.S. Duty on

BOOKS AND BOOKS OF PRINTS,
BOUND OR UNBOUND.

I beg to offer the following remarks for your consideration:—

§ 1. That the importation of books is a benefit to the country, the U. S. Legislature virtually admits by

(a) Allowing private citizens returning from abroad, to take in with them, Duty free, such books as they may require professionally.

(b) By having granted to all Public Libraries the privilege of free importation of books of any date.

(c) By conceding free admission to all books twenty years old.

§ 2. The Duty upon books less than twenty years old, is 25% *ad valorem*.

(a) It is this rigid "*ad valorem*" prescription which leads to difficulty and trouble in the case of speculative consignments to the U.S., the sender being necessarily ignorant of what his books may realize.

(b) Many books bear no dates, and the vigilance of the Custom-House Officers is thus rendered nugatory.

(c) Of some works in two or more volumes, only one or more volumes may be twenty years old, while the others may be under that age. This case must necessarily cause doubt, uncertainty, and trouble to the Custom-House Officer and the Importer.

(d) Some old books (above twenty years old) may be in modern bindings. In those instances the Boston Custom-House Officers claim the right to assess Duty upon the full value of the book, apparently on a presumption that the modern binding has power to transmute the nature of the book. Yet, granting the reasonableness of such a presumption—nobody, not even the finest expert, can decide with sufficient accuracy the date of a binding.

§ 3. Old books and French (non-English) books are Duty free, yet, when they happen to comprise, or consist of plates (lithographs or copper-engravings), a heavy Duty is collected.

*** This has happened to a Boston gentleman who had imported the Florence Gallery, 4 vols. folio, text and plates, 1789-1807.

These difficulties and discrepancies of the U.S. Tariff could easily be overcome in the interest of all persons concerned, especially of the Protectionists, by such a modification of the U.S. Tariff as I venture to propose below:—

"PAPER, and PARCHMENT, and all books, whether bound or unbound, whether written, or printed in types, or produced by photographic, lithographic, or engraved processes, or a combination of any of such methods, should pay (Ten Dollars?) per Hundredweight."

"No exceptions to be made on account of dates or binding."

Thus a Government, desirous of protecting native industries might fix any rate of Duty that might be agreed upon, and the passing of Books, Books of Prints and Engravings through the Custom House would be simplified for the Custom-House Officers and the Importers.

I remain, dear Sir,
Your very obedient servant,
BERNARD QUARITCH.

On February 11 and 12 C. F. Libbie & Co., of Boston, will sell a large and interesting collection of English and foreign books, comprising history, biography, fiction, travels, encyclopedias, works on medicine, science and the fine arts, bibliography, engravings, etc. The catalogue is now ready.

THE EDWARDS BUG COLLECTION

THE collection of insects formed by the late Henry Edwards, the distinguished actor, a proposition to purchase which as a donation from the theatrical managers to the Museum of Natural History has lately been made, consists of about 300,000 specimens of all orders and from all parts of the globe. In all, there are about 40,000 different kinds. The butterflies and moths (hepidoptera) and the beetles (coleoptera) form the bulk of the collection. The hepidoptera are represented in large numbers of individuals, and a long series from all parts of the world, especially Australia, New Zealand, South America, and the Pacific coast of North America. Mr. Edwards described and named a large number of new species from this country, and all his types, about 450 in number, are in the collection. It also contains the many types of various other well-known entomologists.

The family of aegendae, or clear-winged moths, is well represented, and is considered one of the best in the world. As far as the North American species are concerned, it is the best and finest in existence. Out of the 110 species which are found in America, about 104 are in this collection, and these are mostly all types. By the word "types" it should be understood that these are specimens from which the original description of these species has been made. When an insect is discovered, and it is found to be unknown to science, a description is made of the same, and a name is given to it and the specimen is marked "type" on the label with its name. A typical collection is highly prized by all students, as the types and the original descriptions of the species form the basis for the future study of entomology. The Edwards collection in this respect is considered by authorities in the science one of the best in existence, and it is one of the largest private collections in the world.

This scientific treasure occupies two large rooms in the former residence of Mr. Edwards, No. 185 East 116th street, and it is stored and arranged in different kinds of cabinets and on shelves containing about 1,200 boxes of various sizes. There is no collection of insects now in market that would be more suitable for a museum than this one, and because of its great educational value it should be carefully preserved and so placed that it may be readily accessible to all interested in the study and welfare of entomological science. Besides the valuable types mentioned above, the collection also contains many other unique oddities and rarities, in the different orders of insects, such as the beetles (coleoptera); flies, (diptera); bugs, (hemiptera); dragon-flies, (newrop-tera); grasshoppers, (orthoptera); and bees and wasps, (hymenoptera). All are valuable.

Mr. Edwards began forming this vast collection about thirty years ago. He spent much money and all his leisure hours for its increase. His travels in various parts of the world afforded him many opportunities for enriching his collection with choice and rare specimens, hardly obtainable under other circumstances. His entomological library, which is an adjunct to the collection of insects, contains about 500 volumes and about 1,200 pamphlets, many of which are autograph copies, presented by their authors. The library also includes several volumes of entomological correspondence—Mr. Edwards having been in constant correspondence with many well-known authorities in this science. It would be a serious loss to New York if this remarkable and valuable collection were allowed to go away from the city.

ROBERT BROWNING'S FORTUNE

To the Editor THE COLLECTOR.

SIR: I notice in a recent article on Robert Browning, that his poems were not a pecuniary success, until the later years of his life, and that he never what one might say really made money by them. Yet he lived in ample comfort and left a considerable personal property when he died. Can you tell me if he had a private fortune?

University Club, Jan. 25th, 1892.

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Browning had no private means to begin with, or at least none of any amount, but he and his wife came in for a handsome fortune by accident. A Mr. John Kenyon, a very wealthy West India plantation owner, resided in London, and was a great admirer of certain English poets. He died in 1857, and by his will left about £150,000 in legacies to persons he loved or admired. Of this Robert Browning received £6,500 and Elizabeth Barrett Browning £4,000. This amount of over \$50,000 cash assured the poet's future comfort. His returns from his writings, while not magnificent, also gave him a comfortable income in his later years. ED. THE COLLECTOR.